

Germany

And elsewhere? The rules, country by country

AUTHORITIES AND PROCEDURES

Rights holders ; GEMA ; authorities of the Land and municipality.

RECENT FILMS

Distributor availability.

KEY POINT

FSK and supervision of minors according to age and end time.

FILM RIGHTS

Public performance rights for Germany, covering the film, venue, date, promotion, and free admission or ticketing; a license for indoor use is not valid for an announced outdoor screening. No one-year deadline: programming depends on available rights and distributor conditions.

MUSIC

GEMA is handled separately — MPLC Germany expressly distinguishes the film license from the music license — with a tariff for one-off screenings (tariff T).

SESSION AUTHORIZATION

Setup depends on the state, municipality, and site: public order, traffic, fire, or green space management may apply. Local noise and safety regulations must be checked.

YOUNG AUDIENCE AND SPECIAL FEATURES

FSK classification and accompaniment rules (§ 11 JuSchG): under six years always accompanied; 6 to 13 years if the session ends after 8 PM; 14 and 15 years after 10 PM; 16 and 17 years after midnight. A family film shown late at night requires appropriate control at the entrance.

In detail

The organizer must obtain public performance rights for Germany. Licenses intended for certain indoor uses should not be presumed valid for an outdoor session publicly announced. The agreement must cover the film, the venue, the date, the promotion, and whether it is free or ticketed. MPLC Germany expressly distinguishes the film authorization from that relating to its music; GEMA in particular provides a tariff for one-off screenings.

Sources :

- [MPLC Germany — Outdoor film screenings](#)
- [GEMA — Rate T](#)

Administrative setup depends on the state, municipality, and site. Public space occupation may involve several services: public order, traffic, fire prevention, or green space management. Local noise and safety regulations must be checked. There is no general one-year deadline comparable to the French non-commercial outdoor

regime: programming depends on available rights and distributor conditions.

Sources :

- [Düsseldorf — Burgplatz usage rules, including open-air cinema](#)
- [Filmbankmedia Germany — Projection Licenses](#)

Protecting minors is a major operational point. The FSK classification must be respected, as well as the chaperone rules: children under six must be accompanied; for ages 6 to 13, chaperones are required if the screening ends after 8 PM; for ages 14 and 15, after 10 PM; for ages 16 and 17, after midnight. The chaperone must meet the legal requirements. A family film shown late in the evening therefore requires appropriate entry control.

Sources :

- [Youth Protection Act — § 11, film screenings](#)

Common rules: three authorizations not to be confused

Film rights

Public screening of a protected work requires the consent of the rights holders, except where applicable legal exceptions apply. This consent must be obtained from the producer, distributor, or an authorized representative for the territory concerned. Purchasing a DVD, renting a file, or subscribing to a streaming service does not, in itself, grant the right to screen the film to the public. Free admission, non-profit status, or cultural objectives do not constitute a general exemption.

Sources :

- [GOV.UK — Showing films and TV shows in public](#)
- [U.S. Copyright Office — 17 USC, chapter 1 \(§ 106, right of public performance\)](#)
- [MPLC Italy — Outdoor Screenings](#)

Administrative authorization

It concerns the event, the venue or the operator's activity. A film license does not reserve a park and is not permission to receive several hundred people. Conversely, an agreement with the town hall does not transfer any projection rights. The exact scope depends on the country and, often, the competent authorities.

Music rights

They may require a separate procedure. This is particularly the case with SACEM in France, GEMA in Germany and SIAE in Italy. You need to check what the contract actually covers: the music incorporated in the film, the welcome music and any possible concert are different uses. Filmbankmedia also refers its British clients to PRS for Music for appropriate music coverage.

Sources :

- [CNC — Non-commercial screening, common provisions](#)
- [GEMA — Rate T](#)
- [SIAE — Film and audiovisual screenings](#)
- [Filmbankmedia — Questions about licenses and music rights](#)

Preparing a screening: decisions that prevent blockages

Define the project before booking the rights

Prepare a form indicating the country, municipality, site, organizer status, main date and fallback date, expected

audience, film, language, format, entry-level price and partners. This data enables the distributor and administration to respond to a specific event.

Distinguish legal deadlines from processing deadlines

The French visa timeframe, the Spanish timeframe applicable to administrations, and the British TEN notice period do not have the same purpose. Planning several weeks of preparation is an organizational recommendation, not a universal legal deadline. A regional commission or a local permit may require a longer lead time.

Obtain a written agreement covering the outdoors

Specify the number of screenings, the territory, the authorized medium, advertising, revenue to be declared, and postponement conditions. An annual license, authorization for another country, or conditions from a partner cinema do not automatically apply to a new event.

Sources :

- [Filmbankmedia — Single Title Screening Licence](#)
- [Swank — Conditions for parks and recreation, booking and postponement](#)

Site preparation and operation

Have the gauge, circulation, emergency access, electrical installations, sanitary facilities, accessibility and noise levels validated according to applicable regulations. For the screen, request the installation, anchoring or weighting instructions and weather limits from the provider. Define who will monitor conditions and decide to interrupt the session. No single wind threshold can be given for all screens and all sites.

Sources :

- [Bari Municipality — Event file, technical documents and safety of temporary installations](#)
- [San Diego — Special Events, event preparation](#)
- [ADA National Network — Accessible Temporary Events](#)

Establish a budget and divide responsibilities

Separately plan film rights, potential music rights, site rental, technical aspects, insurance, security, communication, and applicable taxes. In the service contract, identify who reserves the film, declares the event, checks ages, manages ticket sales, and handles cancellations. A distributor's rates do not constitute a national legal scale.

The absence of a comparable authorization to the CNC does not therefore mean a lack of regulation. The relevant comparison concerns the actual project: recent or catalog film, free municipal screening or paid exploitation, already equipped venue or temporary installation. Official sources set the framework; local authorities and rights holders specify the conditions of the specific case.